R E P O R T R E S U M E S

ED 011 446 FL 000 427

MODIFIED SCHEDULING AND FOREIGN LANGUAGES.

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PUB DATE NOV 66

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.09 HC-$0.44 11P.

DESCRIPTORS- *FLEXIBLE SCHEDULES, *MODERN LANGUAGES, *HIGH SCHOOLS, *TEAM TEACHING, *LANGUAGE LABORATORY USE, CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT, INDEPENDENT STUDY, LARGE GROUP STUDY, PACING, SMALL GROUP INSTRUCTION, SEATTLE

NATHAN HALE HIGH SCHOOL OF SEATTLE, WASHINGTON, IS OPERATING ON A MODIFIED SCHEDULE CALLED "SIX ON SEVEN." A STUDENT REGISTERS FOR SEVEN PERIODS WHICH ARE ROTATED ON A 7-DAY CYCLE AND IS TAUGHT IN FOUR MORNING SESSIONS AND ONE LONG AFTERNOON SESSION. STUDENTS AND TEACHERS PROFIT FROM THIS SCHEDULING. THE PROGRAM HAS RESULTED IN SUCH NEW DEVELOPMENTS AS A TAPE LIBRARY OF ALL THE FORMAL LESSONS TAUGHT IN THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE CLASSES, NEW TEAM-PLANNING AND TEAM-TEACHING PROGRAMS IN WHICH TEACHERS CAPITALIZE ON THEIR PARTICULAR TALENTS, SEMINAR COURSES WITH A SEMIPROGRAMED SYSTEM OF LEARNING AND EXTENSIVE LABORATORY EXPERIENCE, AND A MAINTENANCE-PROGRESSION PROGRAM FOR STUDENTS WHO WANT TO RETAIN FLUENCY OR INCREASE THEIR COMPETENCY IN A LANGUAGE. THIS ARTICLE IS PUBLISHED IN "THE BULLETIN OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SECONDARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS," VOLUME 50, NUMBER 313, NOVEMBER 1966. (AUTHOR/AS)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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THE
BULLETIN
OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SECONDARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

Background for Choice-Making

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Number 313
November 1966

FL 000 427 ED011446

Vol. 50 No. 313 • NASSP Bulletin—Background for Choice-Making Rank-in-Class • November 1966

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THE BULLETIN OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SECONDARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS is published nine times a year, monthly September through May, by the National Association of Secondary School Principals, a department of the National Education Association. Contents are listed in *Education Index*. Material published herein is neither endorsed by nor official policy of the NASSP except where so stated.

Subscription price is $15 yearly; single copies, $2 each. Editorial, subscription, and advertising offices: National Association of Secondary School Principals, 1201 Sixteenth Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

Second-class postage is paid at Washington, D.C., and at additional mailing offices.

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Its chairman describes the ways in which a foreign language department is taking advantage of a modified, though not modular, schedule.

Modified Scheduling and Foreign Languages

IGOR M. GLADSTONE

NATHAN Hale High School of Seattle, Washington, opened its doors in September of 1963. While the comprehensive program of the school is typical of that of any high school in the city, Nathan Hale High School embodies an unusual scheduling feature: it is operating on a modified schedule called "6 on 7."

Under this plan, a student registers for seven periods instead of the traditional six. The seven periods usually consist of five subjects, plus physical education and a study hall. However, if the student's grade-point average warrants, he may enroll in six subjects, omitting study hall. The seven periods rotate on a seven-day cycle during which each subject is taught in four morning sessions and in one long afternoon session. Thus, though registered for seven periods, the student attends only five periods per day: four 55-minute sessions in the morning and one 95-minute session in the afternoon.

This modified scheduling has several major advantages:

- Opportunities for students to select subjects are increased; thus, enrollment in elective subjects such as music, art, foreign languages, business education, and home economics has grown.

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- The monotony, or "learning lag," associated with conventional schedules is considerably diminished.
- Because teachers average less daily contact with students, a welcome increase in planning time is available to them.

In relation to the foreign language program, this modified schedule has resulted in development of:

- a tape library containing all that is taught in the foreign language classes
- team-planning and team-teaching programs which enable teachers to capitalize on their particular strengths and talents
- seminar courses utilizing a semi-programed system of learning in conjunction with extensive laboratory experience, and with individual recitation and group exchange
- a maintenance-progression program open to students who wish to refresh their knowledge of a foreign language, to retain fluency in a language, or to increase their language competence.

The Tape Library

Seattle teachers of many years' experience with foreign-language laboratories have observed that drills, a variety of listening experiences, pronunciation, and articulation practice should reinforce and complement the language courses. For this reason, students must have readily available all taped materials for the different languages taught in the department.

The Nathan Hale foreign language laboratory contains 36 individual booths, 18 of them with student tape decks for individual library work. The teacher at the console panel can control 23 different programs and monitor individually all 36 students in the room. A recording room and space for tape storage are in the rear of the laboratory. The foreign language staff constantly adds to and keeps up-to-date a heavily utilized tape library, which presently consists of 800 taped lessons in French, German, Russian, and Spanish. A comprehensive library for all modern languages now taught at Nathan Hale will ultimately necessitate keeping current about 1,200 taped lessons. Development of a system

for quick language and lesson identification is now under way.

Acquisition of such a tape library is time-consuming and involves two types of work: cueing the commercially prepared tapes which accompany the textbooks; and making original recordings of supplementary and enrichment readers, with timed silences inserted for student repetition and practice. Operation of the library requires the cooperative efforts of the entire foreign language staff. In addition, student assistants do routine processing; and services of native speakers who visit the school through the cooperation of the Seattle School District are enlisted in the preparation of tapes for instructional purposes.

Language laboratory work at Nathan Hale has taken on a new dimension because the tapes available now make it possible for teachers to present drill and pattern practices, to combine audio-experiences with talks by native speakers, and to train students in rapid aural comprehension and fluent speech. All students can practice aloud, simultaneously and yet individually. The teacher can focus his attention on a student's performance without interrupting the rest of the class. The voluminous tape library makes possible individualized work and very greatly reduces the problems caused by differences in learning rates among students.

Team Teaching in Foreign Languages

Increasing class size, more complex text materials, and sophisticated electronic equipment demand that the teacher have more time for planning. Team planning and team teaching open avenues to better teaching and richer instructional programs. In the foreign language department, classes of the same language and level are grouped in pairs for certain aspects of learning. Teachers analyze each learning unit to determine what should be taught, by whom, and how. Large-group presentations, small study groups, laboratory practice, and individual conferences are used.

A team-teaching cycle might involve students and teachers in this way:

> On "A" day, in the little theatre, chapter five of *Au Pays du Soleil* is introduced to a large group consisting of two classes

of third-level French. Teacher A presents the chapter and explains it in terms of thought content, difficulty, and word usage. Rapid group-reading of selected patterns is practiced, followed by group study and problem solving. While this is going on, Teacher B has time to plan the next unit.

On "C" day, each French teacher meets individually with his group; the students develop a dialogue based on the material in the chapter.

On "D" day, the long session in the afternoon is led in French by Teacher B in the little theatre. Papers on structural usage from the preceding "D" day are returned and discussed, with the aid of the overhead projector. Then chapters seven and eight of *France in Review* are reviewed in detail. Transparencies made in advance are used in explaining the structures that could cause difficulty. Each point is practiced until students are familiar with the structures. The long session moves briskly, with significance for the students, because of the great amount of varied practice.

On "F" day, there is a general laboratory period. Teacher A plays the tape of chapter five of *Au Pays du Soleil* for one part of the period. The students listen and do the oral practice work connected with the chapter. In the second part, Teacher A introduces chapter six and explains its content in French.

On "G" day, the students and Teacher B meet in the lunchroom, where they spend 20 minutes on a short quiz. Then each student prepares an oral summary of chapter six of *Au Pays du Soleil* and recites it to one of the two French teachers in the room.

Teachers' Reactions

What are the teachers' reactions to the program? Here are some:

- Often I am asked, "How does your part in team teaching enrich the course for the student?" We are offering double resources. We are giving the best of ourselves. The students hear two people speaking the language where they would otherwise hear only one. We are giving our students more opportunity to be on their own, to develop responsibilities, and to study independently. We readily encourage individual study projects.
- In our team teaching, we combined our teaching strengths. My colleague is more knowledgeable in literature but my great in-

terest and teaching ability is in the social and cultural field. By combining our efforts, we have produced a course of which we are very proud. Our enthusiasm provided motivation for the students to continue to advanced levels.

- The regular seven-day instructional cycle would require a teacher to meet 30 classes out of 35. Now, because of team teaching, each of the teachers meets only 23 out of 35. Thus, a teacher has 23 classes and 12 study and preparation periods during a seven-day cycle. We have time to plan ahead and to create learning opportunities that are meaningful to the students. In contrast to current practice, we teach approximately 18 hours a week instead of the accepted 25.

- Our teaching load in the fall was first-, second-, and third-year level plus a seminar class. With difficulty, we were trying to keep up with our work. When our team teaching program began, we decided to divide our preparation levels. At the present time I lead in the first and second levels; my team colleague leads in the third level, and has charge of the seminar classes. I emphasize structural learning, while my colleague stresses literature. Thus, my function in the third level is to supervise and assist in general aspects of the work, and to help students in the laboratory with comprehension and testing on the literary material presented by my colleague.

- Good teaching materials and proper plant facilities are vital to successful team teaching. By experimenting, the two of us find that certain materials work well in large groups, while others are effective only in smaller groups. I remember my first large-group presentation. It began with efforts to present a prereading unit of the type that had been used in a regular classroom. I expected the usual responses and interactions; however, the results were discouraging. My colleague had the same experience.

  We could only conclude that an instructional program requiring reaction and responses is not satisfactory in large-group meetings. We tried other ideas. In one of our large-group presentations, a unit on a geographical area, we used overlays and an overhead projector, together with the taped description of the region. This was followed by slides. The speech came through the sound system. By manipulating and using transparencies in place of the usual chalkboard, it was possible to stress special aspects of the presentation until it was obvious that the student audience grasped the full meaning of our unit. At the end of the period, this presentation was followed by a quiz. We had an especially good response from all the students on this particular day. Interest was high, as demonstrated afterward by meaningful discussions in small groups.

Seminar Classes

Although the tape library allows sound tracks to be used as if each were a book and although team teaching provides for specialized presentation, the student needs to practice the language and to share his newly acquired knowledge and competency with others. For this reason, seminar classes were created. Administratively, such classes solve the problem of small registration in advanced foreign language classes.

The foreign language seminar features a semi-programed system of language progression along with intensive laboratory use, individualized recitation, and group interaction. It is designed for seniors who have had the equivalent of two years of a language, elect to continue in it, and give evidence of maturity for self-pacing in individual study.

We suggest a grade-point average of 3.0 or better and a teacher's recommendation as prerequisites for the seminars, which are offered in all languages taught at Nathan Hale. Each seminar course is based on a comprehensive list of reading selections, grouped according to levels. Each student receives, in addition to the reading list, a syllabus for his level which details the material for one unit of work. The syllabus explains the objectives of the course, the text materials to be studied, an explanation of the recommended method of learning, and a detailed study plan. An activity sheet lists the days when general and group meetings, movies, and presentations by resource people will take place. Each student also receives a seminar course-content sheet which is, in effect, a contract. This contract lists the approximate dates for the start of each unit of work, for the completion of the unit, and for examinations. Each student keeps his own attendance sheet, showing how much time he studies in the various areas provided and the time he spends in conference and in group meetings. The student receives credits and grades in proportion to the quality and quantity of his work.

Since the first semester's pilot program proved successful, in the second semester the advanced classes were combined with the pilot class to provide three seminar groups with three teachers. These teachers cooperated to improve the program: Teacher A worked on the reading selection forms,

Teacher B prepared tape availability lists, and Teacher C made recommendations for seminar discussion procedures and student contract design.

Plant facilities are not yet ideal for our seminar program. We need a general study room adjoining a conference room for individual or group work. This room should have ready access to the language laboratory. Plans are being made for improving accessibility between rooms assigned to the department.

Maintenance Progression Program

What about students who studied a language in junior high school and have not continued their study from lack of time? What should we do about students who need more help? And those who wish simply to maintain their ability and interest in a language by studying it leisurely, without worrying about credits? These problems are genuine; yet the traditional school program cannot meet them economically. At Nathan Hale, we feel that the tape library organization and the seminars offer features that can be properly utilized to answer the need for a maintenance program.

A maintenance student has constant access to the laboratory. With adaptations, the syllabus worked out for the seminar classes gives him all the information he needs to study any phase of a chosen language. A student taking advantage of the maintenance program has a class period or study hall period available during which he can report to the language complex.

In summary, the comprehensive tape library, team teaching, seminar courses, and the maintenance program are the outcomes of a re-examination of the commonly accepted programs of language teaching in relation to the modified scheduling at Nathan Hale.